

§ 1709.4

Target area means the geographic area to be served by the grant.

Target community means the unit or units of local government in which the target area is located.

§ 1709.4 Allocation of available funds among programs.

The Administrator, in his sole discretion, shall allocate available funds among the programs administered under this part and determine the grant application periods under each program. In making fund allocations for each fiscal year, the Administrator may consider the amount of available funds, the nature and amount of unfunded grant applications and prior awards, Agency resources, Agency priorities, and any other pertinent information.

§ 1709.5 Determination of energy cost benchmarks.

(a) The Administrator shall establish, using the most recent data available, and periodically revise, the home energy cost benchmarks and the high energy cost benchmarks used to determine community eligibility for high energy cost grant and loan programs and the Denali Commission high energy cost grants and loans. In setting these energy cost benchmarks, the Administrator shall review the latest available information on home energy costs published by the EIA. High energy cost benchmarks will be set at 275 percent of the applicable national average home energy cost benchmark as determined by the Administrator from the published EIA data. Eligibility benchmarks shall be published in each grant announcement.

(b) For use in determining eligibility for High Energy Cost Grants, the Administrator may establish benchmarks for national average annual household expenditures and for national average household per unit energy expenditures for major home energy sources or fuels, including, but not limited to, electricity, natural gas, fuel oil, kerosene, liquified petroleum gas (propane), other petroleum products, wood and other biomass fuels, coal, wind and solar energy.

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§ 1709.6 Appeals.

An applicant may appeal a decision by the Assistant Administrator, Electric Program rejecting an application for failure to meet eligibility requirements. Applicants may not appeal rating panel scores or rankings. An appeal must be made, in writing to the Administrator, within 10 days after the applicant is notified of the determination to reject the application. Appeals must state the basis for the appeal and shall be submitted to the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1500, Washington, DC 20250–1500. Thereafter, the Administrator will review the appeal to determine whether to sustain, reverse, or modify the original determination. The Administrator's determination shall be final. A written copy of the Administrator's decision will be furnished promptly to the applicant.

§ 1709.7 Applicant eligibility.

An outstanding judgment obtained against an applicant by the United States in a Federal Court (other than in the United States Tax Court), which has been recorded, shall cause the applicant to be ineligible to receive a grant or loan under this part until the judgment is paid in full or otherwise satisfied. RUS financial assistance under this part may not be used to satisfy the judgment.

§ 1709.8 Electronic submission.

Applicants may submit applications and reports electronically if so provided in the applicable grant announcement and grant agreements or if other regulations provide for electronic submission. Any electronic submissions must be in the form prescribed in the applicable grant announcement, grant agreement, or regulation.

§ 1709.9 Grant awards and advance of funds.

The grantee must execute a grant agreement that is acceptable to the Agency. The grantee must sign and return the grant agreement to the Agency, within the time specified, before any grant funds will be advanced.